



City Groups That Provide Meals

1. Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street - 423-2285
Sunday - 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
- sandwiches and snacks
Monday to Thursday - 10:30 a.m.
- sandwiches
Friday - 9:45 a.m. - sandwiches

2. Christ Church

12116-102 Avenue - 488-1118
Every 3rd Saturday - 5:00 p.m. meal

3. Herb Jamieson Centre

10014 -105A Avenue - 429-3470
For men not on assistance
Monday to Friday 7:00 to 7:45 a.m. break-
fast
12:00 - 12:45 p.m. - lunch
5:00 to 5:45 p.m. - supper
Weekends 11:00 - 11:45 a.m. - breakfast
4:00 - 4:45 p.m. - supper

4. House of Refuge Mission

10339-95 Street
Daily - 8 p.m. - meal

5. Marian Centre

10536-98 Street - 424-3544
Daily except Wednesdays
12:00 to 12:45 p.m. meal
Closed from the 27th of each month to the 1st
of the

6. The Mustard Seed

10635-96 Street - 426-5600
Monday to Friday - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. supper
Saturday - 5 p.m. - supper
Zero tolerance of alcohol

7. Operation Friendship

9526-106 Avenue - 429-2626
Monday to Friday - 9:00 a.m. - breakfast
Monday to Sunday - 12 noon - lunch
5:00 p.m. - supper
For seniors over 55 only

8. Red Road Healing Centre - 471-3220

Friday - 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. - soup and ban-
nock

9. Salvation Army

9619-101 Avenue- 429-4274
Fridays - 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. - breakfast

10. St Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

9606-110 Avenue - 426-1122
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 7:00
a.m Breakfast

11. St. Faith's Anglican Church -

parish hall
11725-93 Street - 477-5931
Thursday - 12:00 noon - soup
Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. -breakfast
3rd Friday of the month - 7:00 p.m. - supper

12. Emmaus Church

5015- 144 Avenue - 275-1647
Monday - 4:45 to 6:00 p.m. - meal

13. Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre

9611-101A Avenue - 423-5302
Meals for women staying at the shelter.
If not, bag lunch is given

14. Edmonton Orthodox Reformed Church

1161- 95 A Street - 479-1860
Thursdays, 6:25 p.m. soup

15. Robertson Wesley United Church

10209-123 Street 482-1587
Second Saturday of each month
January to November, 5:00 p.m. meal

16. Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre

15210 - Stoney Plain Road - 481-4001
Mondays - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. - meal

17. One Accord Bible Fellowship Church

10802 - 93 Street - 425-6310
Saturdays, 10:00 to 1:00 p.m. meals

18. Boyle Street Community Co-operative

10116-105 Avenue - 424-4106

19. B's Diner - Old Strehcona Mall 100 Street. Whyte Avenue

Wednesdays - 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. - meal



Vendors pay 50 cents per paper

Code of Ethics for Edmonton Street News

1. All people have human rights.
2. We reserve the right to refuse publication of any article or ad at the discretion of the board of Edmonton Street News.
3. We will not trivialize poverty in any way.
4. We practice sound journalism, with respect to FOIP legislation, and in respecting the privacy of the persons portrayed in stories and photographs.

Edmonton Street News Volume 5 Issue 2, 2008

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Cover Photo: Memorial Candle by Linda Dumont

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The views presented in this publication are those of the writers.

Correction: In the January 2008 issue a photo of Britney White and Pedro Schultz was mistakenly labeled as Norma Harms and Pedro Schultz.

Proof Reader Needed - volunteer to come to the **Edmonton Street News** office two or three hours per month to work with the editor. Usually two days before the end of the month.

HOMELESSNESS MARATHON
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INFO: WWW.CKUT.CA
OPEN MIC @ MIDNIGHT

A national radio broadcast on homelessness from sunset Wednesday February 20th, until sunrise

Bridge to Community — a look at affordable housing



I was invited to give an introductory speech at the university where Alex 'Caldereaux was showing the film, Bridge to Community, which was published in 2007 'by Sweetgrass in Calgary. The documentary takes a comprehensive look at affordable housing through interviews with a number of individuals ranging from renters to different groups that are building affordable housing. While the documentary was mainly filmed in Calgary, Edmonton faces very similar challenges when building affordable housing, just some of the players are different.

One issue addressed in the documentary is the replacement of existing housing with condominiums.

This has been happening when apartments are converted and also when older rooming houses and apartment buildings are demolished and instead of replacing them with new affordable housing the site is used to build condominiums or single family dwellings. The need to have a percentage of units geared to affordable housing in new

developments rather than having whole units of affordable housing was another issue. They also looked at NIMBY, the problem of high rents, the problem of low fixed income or insufficient income from employment as barriers to housing. A number of developers, mostly in Calgary, and non-profit societies including Habitat for Humanity were also featured.

The documentary has been called "the most comprehensive work on the subject" to date, and is well worth seeing.

By Linda Dumont



Stephanie Burlie at Memorial

Letter to Goldring MP

Honorable Peter Goldring:

Re: Housing legislation recommendations

We, the undersigned would appreciate your drafting legislation similar to our suggestions.

A. Since Canada has an inexcusably large number of homeless people, who are suffering and could be helped with a saving to the taxpayers, if the money, (an estimated \$5 billion annually now costing our country) could be more wisely allocated,

And since

B. Canada's reputation with the United Nations and many nations is tarnished because we are considered to be one of the most compassionate and rich countries in the world, and since

C. People have died needlessly because of our present policy and actions

Therefore be it resolved that the government of Canada

In all levels match \$1 billion from the private sector towards improving our present homelessness system with \$4 billion, at a saving of \$5 billion to the taxpayers and this money be invested wisely.

Follow the example of outer countries who have better systems, such as Germany, which has legislation requiring each city to have shelter for each resident, even if this

means renting them rooms.

Hire enough social workers and others to help each person become independent as soon as possible whether they are completely homeless, in shelters or with others in overcrowded residences.

Require accountability from each city about:

- 1) Approximate number of homeless they presently have.
- 2) How many reside in shelters.
- 3) Their plan to improve the situation with specific goals and dates by which they intend to have their plan fulfilled.
- 4) A specific date by which they intend to have adequate residences for all who need them, especially children.
- 5) What volunteer agencies and individuals have helped and ask them to write what they have done and what the cost has been.

That each province have adequate spaces for all addicts who desire to get free from their addictions and that people with addictions be encouraged to get help.

We, the undersigned believe that if legislation is passed that addresses the above concerns, every citizen will benefit: the homeless, taxpayers, employees who help bring this about, and the political and other leaders who contribute.

Yours sincerely, Pedro Schultz

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Your voice in Alberta's Legislative Assembly



Third Annual Homeless Memorial Celebration held January 19



Forty four people, who died as a result of homelessness, were remembered at the third annual homeless memorial celebration sponsored by the Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness at the Boyle Street Community Co-operative Saturday, January 19. Lorette Garrick, chair of the Memorial Planning committee, said that although they were commemorating 44 people, 20 men and 24 women, "that isn't the real number - it is much higher."

Rick Chapman from the Inner City Pastoral Ministry, in a reflection on homelessness, recalled a retreat to the mountains that he took last summer. "While I was there, I couldn't help but think of those folks living in Tent City," he said. "Instead of serene mountains they were looking at buildings - the Remand Centre, the Bissell Centre and agencies."

Keith Harting, acting president of ECOHH, said, "If 44 people died of a scourge, there would be concern... Homelessness is a scourge we have a cure for. We know how to cure it, all we need is the will?"

"What was the reaction to Tent City?"

They made the tent city go away, but did not address the issue of homelessness. We have dozens of agencies treating the symptoms. They run around with band aids for the symptoms, but don't fix the problem."

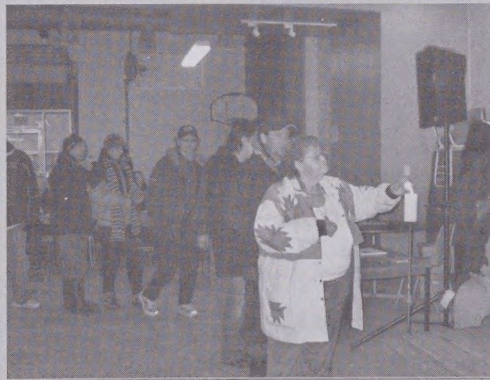
He said that we need to do more to raise awareness of the problem which is lack of affordable housing.

To put a face on homelessness, Rob, one of the working homeless, said, "Homelessness sucks!" He shared some of the problems with trying to find housing, the difficulty in finding anyone who will rent to you if you are homeless and the need for places where people can go to get cleaned up before they go out to get rent confirmations filled out.

"Many people are working their asses off - they get a welfare statement but nobody will fill out their rent confirmation... Being homeless sucks when you have to work while being homeless - it's hard. Many people go through the cycle of working for a while, then go back to the streets."

Family and friends lit candles in memory of those who died.

By Linda Dumont



Choosing Profit over People

Edmonton's city council is listening more to industry than to those most affected by the lack of affordable housing and proposing an ineffective policy agreeable more to business and industry than to solving the affordability issue. The proposed inclusionary housing policy provides an example of city council and industry choosing profit over people.

Edmonton's city council recently proposed a five percent inclusionary housing policy for the city. Inclusionary zoning, as it is otherwise called, typically involves setting aside 10 to 30 percent of new houses or apartments in order to realize affordability for low to moderate-income households. This

policy has been implemented in many vibrant communities across North America as a response to acute housing shortages, resulting in an inclusive mix of 'affordable' and 'market-rate' housing. In Edmonton, the policy went through its only public input stage in November. That input is being ignored while council proceeds with the policy in closed-door meetings solely with industry.

In November, Edmonton's city council held a committee meeting where public and industry were each given a chance to speak on the proposed housing policy. The meeting resulted in councillors voting to create a dif-

Continued at top page

ferent committee consisting of only politicians and developers that would revisit the policy in the new year. This indicates that members of city council would rather discuss market strategies with industry and not interfere with corporate profits than involve those on the ground affected by and dealing with housing and homelessness. By shutting the low-income voice out, city council has dangerously narrowed the debate and has already chosen an ineffective solution.

The council committee has basically given in to industry by choosing the 'incentive-based' approach instead of the 'mandatory' policy. The incentive-based approach allows developers the final say whether the feeble 5% policy will be implemented in a particular new development or not, like random charity. The mandatory policy, on the other hand, would be legally binding through changes in the Municipal Government Act and would ensure the inclusive nature of the policy is realized. However, provincial and municipal governments are reluctant to introduce policies that interfere with 'the market' regardless of the policy's overall benefit.

Developers and their entourage (aka industry) are represented by highly organized lobby groups that pressure governments to maintain business-friendly policies, while neglecting social responsibility. One local lobby group against the inclusionary housing policy and present at the November meeting, the Urban Development Institute (UDI), states on their website that they are "an ambassador for the land development industry to help create vibrant, sustainable communities." Their spokesperson at this meeting said to the media that the five percent policy "will cost developers and home builders \$86 million in the first three years", translating into just under \$29 million a year.

It appears the UDI's ambassador role of creating "vibrant, sustainable communities" stops at the loss of its members' profits. Investigating the initial policy cost further, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reported that total annual housing starts in 2006 (both single family and multi family dwellings) in Edmonton alone (not including suburbs) was 9,816. Calculating the average price of both dwelling types, the housing industry made \$2.95 billion simply from new housing starts in that particular year. Times that by three, give or take some market fluctuation, we have a handsome sum of \$8.85 billion. This lobby group is squabbling over \$86 million, while the industry they represent is making \$8.85 billion in the same amount of time.

Perhaps developers and their entourage are saving their pennies for the next municipal election. Industry is known to contribute to municipal election candidates. Precisely how much remains unknown as election contributions over \$300 are made public, but donations under \$300 remain anonymous. As a result, it is not popularly known that many corporate donors including the housing and development industry make multiple contributions of \$299 through their subsidiaries and multiple bank accounts to candidates who appear politically conducive to industry's business.

While the market has failed to provide housing solutions for a growing underclass of our population, government and industry appear to remain quite harmonized in using market solutions as token responses to the deepening housing crisis. There is nothing stopping city council from implementing the mandatory policy with an increased percentage other than governments' fundamentalist economic ideology choosing industry's profits over people.

By Greg Farrants

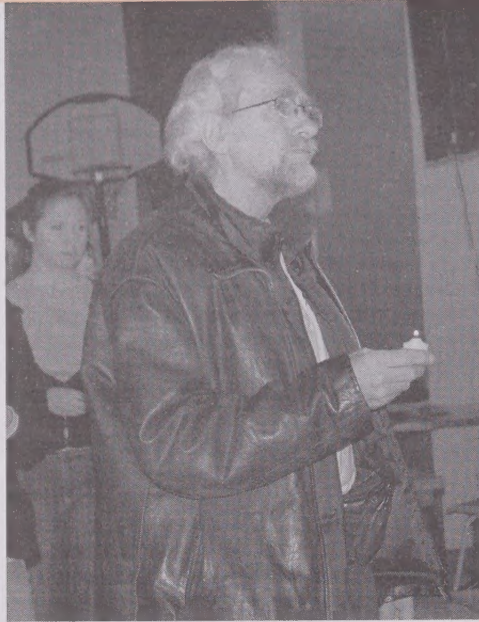
Trial Date set for Pedro Schultz

After a preliminary hearing on January 25, of charges pending against volunteer street pastor Pedro (Peter) Schultz, a date, March 7, was set for him to be tried by judge and jury. Schultz has been charged with dangerous operation of a motor vehicle with intent to cause bodily harm, assault with a weapon (his car) and assault and obstruction of a peace officer. Charges were laid following an incident last summer on the crown land just west of the Bissell Centre that later became the site of Tent City.

In meeting with media just after the hearing, Schultz observed that he had come to the lot that evening in response to a call from campers who were being removed by EPS. "I was there at 9 a.m. and gave the homeless food and left them my cell number to call if the police returned," he said, "They chased us away that time, but later they allowed them to stay." (when the lot was designated as Tent City).

Schultz said that he arrived with the intention of helping the people in dealing with the police. "I would have been willing to help the police," he said.

When Schultz drove onto the lot, his car was unable to stop in time and he hit a police officer. In a statement given to the press he wrote, "I've confessed to God and Constable Stang that what I did was wrong.



I thank God that I know Jesus paid for this sin of mine, too, and am very grateful that He died on the cross in my place. He has given me peace in that I'm willing to accept any consequences the judge and jury

determine for me.

"I had absolutely no intention of injuring anyone, much less a peace officer whose purpose is to protect us. Most have been very supportive and empathic to the plight of Edmonton's over 2,600 homeless with no legal place to stay.

"I pray for Constable Stang's complete recovery and feel great remorse for what I did. I pray that he will eventually forgive me.

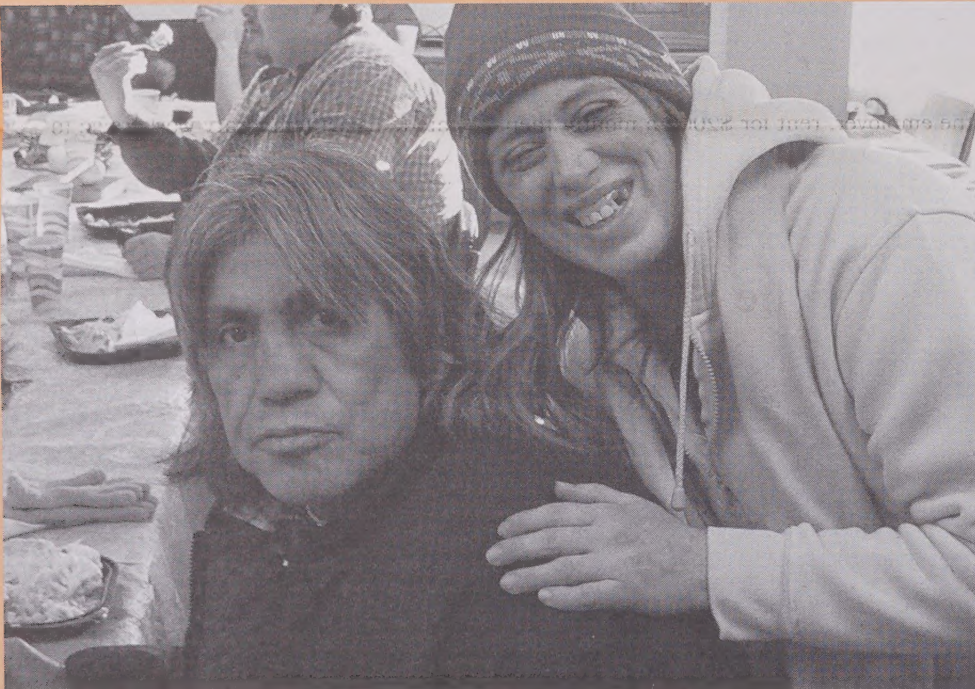
"I've realized that regardless of the consequences of my behaviour, God has blessed my life much more than most, especially in the love, joy and peace he has given me most of the time for over 40 years since Christ changed my me from a self centered person to someone He could use to love like He does.

"My prayer is that some day, despite everything, God is glorified through my life and that He continue to use me in the lives of those less fortunate than I have been, especially Canada's homeless."

After reading his statement, Schultz wept when he spoke about the situation of the homeless, adding, "I'm looking forward to standing trial. The issue of the homeless situation is much more important than my incarceration."

By Linda Dumont

No Longer Homeless in the City



Well, it has been two months since I last wrote anything. A lot has happened since then. I was raped by city workers and left for dead in front of the Boyle Street Co-op. All I was looking for was water to take my medications. I reported it to the police. Thank God, I am still alive, and thank you, Boyle Street Co-op, for being open to the homeless.

Sam and I have found a cute little home. It's so great to be able to have a place to call home. Thanks to the Emergency Relief Centre we were able to furnish our home fairly reasonably. They were fantastic to us.

I also want to thank the John Howard Society from the bottom of my heart for being so helpful in making our lives a lot simpler just by being there in helping find our home. They supported us thoroughly and I don't know how to ever repay them. I love you ladies! The Mustard Seed has also

been there for us in our time of need. They supplied us with a care package for the home and also gave us food when we were hungry. Their nightly meals help when I cannot cook for Sam and myself. In the past, I used to volunteer for the Mustard Seed. I never thought I'd receive so much kindness from a group of people as I have from The Mustard Seed. I love you all, especially Evelyn who has been my anchor in a cruel world.

Christmas came upon us fast. We participated in many festive functions such as the HIV Edmonton dinner, Hope Mission dinners (where I was interviewed for TV), the St. Peter's Lutheran Church breakfast club, Sacred Heart Church Christmas dinner, Boyle Street Co-op Christmas dinner and the Bissell Centre New Year's dinner. Oh, and the most important to me was our own Christmas dinner for the Edmonton Street News Society held at the House of

Refuge Mission where Linda, our editor, and others worked to make sure all were fed and happy. Happy New Year everyone.

Valentine's Day is coming up. I know the most important people in my life love me unconditionally, especially Sam, Daniel, my son, and my mom. Sometimes I wonder what love is or if I have any in my life, but thanks to the many people I've met in the past couple of months, I've restored my faith in love.

Jesus is love and I have Jesus in me like everyone in the world, so if Jesus is love, I must be love, too. I know other people love me, shown in a simple and a heart felt hug, soft touches on my shoulder or a pat on my leg. These are sure signs of love. From all the people who helped me get here I know love and I can give love to all I meet.

I'm immensely happy I have the mother I do because without her many sacrifices I surely would not know Jesus and would not know love, and would be very unhappy. I love you, mom!

I'm also indebted to Jesus for giving me, Sam, an affectionate and loving man. He is great. He has given me lots of joy in the 19 years we have been together. He is a hard worker, humorous and kind hearted. I would have lost my feet and be confined to a wheelchair without him. He hangs on to my words. Some days we fight but we eventually make up during the course of the day or night. We don't ever go to bed angry with each other.

I am thankful for Jesus for letting my son, Daniel, be a part of my life to drape my heart upon.

Keep smiling. Keep hugging. Remember you have to give respect to get respect, not be like the man who gave Sam a quarter for a paper at the Farmers' Market. What an insult! Sam gave him the money back, only to get a \$50 bill from the samw man in front of the cameras on White Avenue!

Happy Valentine's Day!

By Marie Murchie

Importing Prosperity

We have become used to our good life style in Canada being based on importing goods from other parts of the world, where things are made by people paid very little and working in terrible and dangerous conditions. Just look at nearly every item of clothing, toys, electronic goods—made somewhere else by people being paid a few dollars a day. We don't question it, because the more stuff we can buy for the least money the nicer our own lives, no matter what unseen miseries it is creating elsewhere.

So it should be no surprise that we now seem willing to turn a blind eye to the next step down this road. We are now importing tens of thousands of human beings to be used to support us having our comfortable life style. These people are not even dignified with a description that recognizes their humanity—they are usually just called "TFWs" – Temporary Foreign Workers.

There are so many things wrong with this action it would take a whole issue of Edmonton Street News to describe them all. It is time for people to contact politicians and say the whole program must be stopped. Currently each time some new aspect of it gets bad enough that government cannot ignore it, then a quick and inadequate bandage is slapped on that particular bit of bleeding and all the politicians thunder out their general support for the program and assure us it is absolutely necessary to bring people in this way.

Temporary foreign workers are human beings who in many cases would dearly love to come and live and make new lives in Canada for themselves and their families. But when they come in this way it is nearly impossible they will ever be able to do this. They are let in for a year or two and then have to go back to their country of origin. This isn't very different than the way we brought labourers from China 130 years ago to build the railroad.

Meanwhile we have almost a million people who have paid a lot of money in (non-refundable) fees to the Government of Canada and waited years for the chance to be able to come here as immigrants who are not getting to come. We seem to be happier to have a steady flow of people who come, live isolated from the rest of us, and then go back, accomplishing nothing but getting the work done, adding nothing to the quality of life in our communities.

Usually it takes years for governments to figure out how to make the smallest changes in how anything is done, but the temporary foreign worker program appeared suddenly out of the blue about two years ago and now there are so many people coming no one can even give us accurate numbers. (There have been programs for agriculture workers and highly skilled specialists in the past. But bringing large number of low and unskilled workers is new.)

At first employers were required to prove, by advertising jobs locally, that they couldn't find people here to take the jobs but there are now 33 occupations, including such ordinary things as restaurant workers, where the employer doesn't even have to bother doing this first.

One big problem with the program is that it is helping employers hold down wages for all the rest of us. The people coming in this program find even low Canadian wages good compared to the countries where they live, so as long as an employer can get the work done paying those who don't have to live and support their families in Canada they can

avoid having to pay properly for those of us here already.

Unemployment is far too high with many groups of Edmontonians—new immigrants, aboriginal people, people with disabilities are three examples. But people here know that to barely make ends meet with the cost of living here a person needs a full time job that pays at least \$12 an hour, so they can't afford to take jobs at less. The real solution to this is for employers to start paying more for these low-end jobs. Instead they are bringing imported workers willing to work at less.

So, those of us here are hurt by this wholesale import of workers. But the workers themselves are also losing out. Many of them pay brokers thousands of dollars to get them jobs. Technically this may be illegal, but there are so many loopholes that any imaginative broker can find lots of ways to abuse this idea. The same brokers charge the employers thousands of dollars too. Often the jobs turn out to be different than what was promised and to pay less. If a person tries to quit and find another job they may be subjected to threats. If they are injured or get sick they may be fired and put on the next plane home. Temporary workers have such a weak status that it is very easy to intimidate them.

Some employers provide housing for their workers that is simply a quick way to recover a couple of dollars an hour of what they are paying. Do the math. You hire eight workers and put them all up in a house you, the employer, rent for \$2000 a month, then you charge each of the workers \$150 a week for a place to live. Eight times \$600 equals \$4800. You've just recovered \$2800 of what you paid in wages. If you are paying, say,

\$10/hour, that works out to more than \$2/hour you are getting back, making your real wage paid less than \$8/hour. But in Edmonton's tight housing market those workers, most of whom may speak very little English and have no rental references for Edmonton would never be able to rent a place themselves at less cost, so they are stuck.

There are many more serious things wrong with the temporary foreign worker program. But unless people contact federal and provincial politicians and say they want the program to stop and a new and better way of having people come here to live be developed things will carry on. The federal minister responsible for the program, Monte Solberg, repeatedly is quoted in the news saying they want to make the program even easier for employers and to bring even more people more quickly.

One good symbolic thing Canada could do to show we care about this issue would be to sign the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Migrant Workers. So far we have refused to do this in the years since it was brought in. If we demanded of our federal leaders that we sign this at least there would be an agreed international standard of how workers were to be treated to which we could be held.

If you want more official information about the program, there is lots to be found at www.alberta-canada.com/immigration and if you want to read the Alberta Federation of Labour's report by their advocate to assist temporary workers go to www.afl.org.

By Jim Gurnett

"The Street Will Drive You Crazy"

By Eve Bender

Downplaying their psychiatric diagnoses can be helpful to homeless, psychotic women, who may refuse services such as housing because they do not want to be seen as "crazy" and thus more vulnerable to attacks. While psychiatric diagnosis can be essential to proper treatment, overt discussion of diagnosis with some patients with serious mental illness can actually be a stumbling block to their recovery, according to a study in the January American Journal of Psychiatry.

With the help of five graduate student interviewers, author Tanya Luhrmann, Ph.D., spent more than 1,000 hours over three years interviewing 61 women who frequented a drop-in center in Chicago that offered non-clinical services such as laundry, mail, a daily meal, and access to a case-worker. Though Luhrmann, a professor of anthropology at Stanford University, did not conduct formal diagnostic interviews, she noted that 55 percent reported a prior psychiatric hospitalization, and 55 percent reported at least one arrest. Only 28 percent of those she interviewed volunteered a diagnosis of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Luhrmann noted that when women refused services such as housing, they did so because they did not perceive themselves as "crazy," despite wanting and needing a place to stay. Luhrmann explained that it was common knowledge among the women that a person needed a psychiatric diagnosis to obtain a single-occupancy room in the

area. Most of the women Luhrmann interviewed said they believed that the uncertainty and danger of life on the streets drove some "crazy," and they believed that only those who were weak-willed succumbed to the harsh reality of life on the streets by becoming, for instance, psychotic, she told *Psychiatric News*.

The women I interviewed, who themselves could be diagnosed with some kind of psychotic disorder, were motivated to say that they were not going to be "driven crazy by life on the streets" and emphasized that they have a better chance of surviving by not seeking mental health services or social services that require a psychiatric diagnosis. Some of the women at the center linked victimization with mental illness because the perception by others that they are mentally ill makes them vulnerable to attack, Luhrmann noted.

One woman Luhrmann interviewed mentioned that some of the women "talk to themselves... because they let the streets take over them... a lot of the women have been raped by the men here and... can't deal with it, so that just made them go haywire."

That the women for the most part endorsed a view of mental illness as linked to weakness and being defeated is stigmatizing, in Luhrmann's view, but "it is more important to understand that it arises out of a social world they experience as an assault that they have to survive," she noted. In addition, many social-service settings have

Continued on page 8

It's the Democracy, Stupid

Allan Sheppard



Allan Sheppard is a freelance writer and editor, and a volunteer writer for Edmonton Street News. As a pensioner, he finds himself from time to time on the edge of poverty and homelessness. As a self-appointed community elder, he thinks and worries about the needs of children, youth, parents and others who face lives of poverty and inadequate education in the midst of unprecedented wealth.

On the seeming futility of efforts to establish inclusionary housing policies and practices in Edmonton

My respect and enthusiasm have diminished over the years for Pierre Trudeau's performance and achievements as prime minister (as they have, in fact, for all of his successors and most of his predecessors). But Prime Minister Trudeau understood and acted on one thing for which he deserves credit and respect. I would like to say he deserves our enduring gratitude, too, but that would be pointless, for while the concern he understood and addressed is still with us, his simple solution is not.

As prime minister, Pierre Trudeau understood that the golden rule of capitalism—those who have the gold make the rules—is, and probably always has been embedded deep in the foundations of democracy. Wealth buys (and attracts) access to power for the people and organizations that have it. Access gains influence. And influence commands respect and the ability to persuade governments to adopt desired policies, legislation, and practices. Poverty buys little beyond the bare necessities of existence and survival, and not always that.

The solution that Prime Minister Trudeau provided for this inherent challenge in democracy (I could call it a flaw, but I won't; if there is a flaw, it could just as easily be in the implementation, not in the basic design, of democracy as we know it) was to give money to poor and marginalized Canadians and organizations that represent them to help them compete with the wealthy and their representatives in the rituals and games of lobbying government—not on an equal footing, to be sure, for the pockets of establishment lobbies are generally deep and easily replenished by the simple expedient of passing the costs on to "the consumer" in a process that is not easily distinguishable from a sales tax (albeit an invisible one) — but enough to buy basic research, documentation, and representation from legal, academic, communications, and other professionals.

That approach to giving the poor and marginalized some means to speak their truths to power, enlightened though it may have been, did not survive long after Trudeau retired. Slowly, surely, what might have been a positive legacy from a controversial prime minister has been gutted and diminished until it no longer exists to any effective extent.

The erosion started with the Mulroney Progressive Conservative government. It continued under the Paul Martin Liberals. And now, the Stephen Harper Conservatives have all but euthanized what had become an ineffective practice because it was no longer supported by a commitment to social justice. The rationale was that it is inappropriate for governments to help actual or potential opponents try to undermine government policies, legislation, and programs. One could

only do that legitimately with one's own money.

There was no shortage of individuals and organizations that attracted criticism for their government-subsidized non-establishment or anti-establishment positions and behaviour. But the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and one of its more radical presidents, Sunera Thobani, became lightning rods for establishment (and would-be establishment) discontent with the idea of government support for political action by marginalized Canadians and helped speed up the process of turning off the taps.

What Prime Minister Trudeau understood, and what his successors largely have not (or if they understood the notion, they could not accept it) was that democracy, to be effective, needs debate. Contrary positions and views need to be heard, even when they are hard to take, and even when they are not supported by significant numbers of Canadians, or significant numbers of within the establishment. They do not have to prevail, but they need to be able to state their case (or cases) effectively so citizens can choose on merit between competing points of view.

Democracy, to be effective, needs debate.

Democracy, at least as we have come to understand and practice it, is inherently adversarial. It needs and, at its best, welcomes a wide range and variety of points of view. At its worst, it excludes points of view by limiting effective participation to those individuals and organizations with the financial means to compete. The result is to weaken democracy and compromise the decisions and actions that might come out of any debate.

It may be more efficient to exclude certain points of view, but it is not always effective. And it is not democratic. In modern democracy where much of the debating goes on behind the scenes among experts from government and lobbyists representing the views of interested parties, to limit participation on the basis of ability to pay is to limit democracy.

Such a line of reasoning leads one to conclude that, in the interests of democracy (in a country that presumes to speak for democracy in corners of the world where it is not yet practiced) governments may need, from time to time, to give marginalized citizens enough money to participate in—and contribute to—the processes of democracy.

All of which brings me to the reason for this modest meditation on peace, order, and good government: the recently announced news that city council and developers are meeting behind closed doors to develop a policy that may (or may not) include provisions that require developers to include a specified amount (possibly five per cent) of low-cost housing in all future residential developments in the city. The city took public input on the issue in November, but the people who will (or will not) be affected (positive-

ly or negatively) by any policy developed by council and the industry will not take part in the discussions (or negotiations) now under way. Incidental public input, which may (or may not) be included in the process now taking place among the city and industry representatives is not democratic participation. It is undemocratic exclusion.

It is not, I might add, what many of us thought we were getting when Stephen Mandel became mayor. Does the mayor's background as a developer, and his presumable sympathy to the points of view of developers, have anything to do with the way the city is dealing with this issue? Possibly not. But how will we ever know? And how can we not ask the question?

One thing we know for sure: everyone participating in the policy-making process will have or have access to, plenty of information and background on the developers' needs, concerns, and aspirations around an inclusionary housing policy. What we cannot be so sure of is who, if anyone, involved in the process has any experience in or sympathy with the needs, concerns, and aspirations of low-income Edmontonians. And whom should we expect, in such circumstances, to get (at the very least) the benefit of the doubt from the city on matters where the interests of developers conflict (or seem to conflict) with the interests of marginalized citizens?

An Edmonton Journal editorial (Low-cost housing should be mandatory, not voluntary, January 7, 2008) puts the issue simply and starkly: "Councillors would rather discuss market strategies with industry than involve those affected by high housing costs and homelessness. By shutting the low-income voice out, council has dangerously narrowed the debate and has already chosen an ineffective solution."

The ineffective solution referred to by the Journal's editorial writer is to make whatever amount of low-cost housing is deemed appropriate for future developments voluntary on the part of developers, rather than mandatory. Experience in other jurisdictions tells us that voluntary inclusionary policies do not work. But that still seems to be what we will get. That it should be the fruit of a flawed process just adds injury to the insult that is about to be handed down from council.

How sad.

The point is not that developers should not expect or be allowed to make money. It is that the developer's bottom line is not, and should not always be, the city's bottom line. People want to live in cities because they are places that are clearly greater than the simple sum of their parts. A house is not a home. A development is not a community. And a city is not just a collection of developments. Cities—great cities—comprise homes and communities, which have social, as well as economic dimensions. It is the city's job to find the best balance between both, not to listen exclusively and privately to one side and cater to its needs.

Postscript

One reason, aside from the unfair advantage given to the biases and influence of the development industry, why the city's new inclusionary policy will include voluntary controls, is that the province, in its market fundamentalist way, sees that previous efforts to establish mandatory policies have been overturned in the courts on the grounds that they went against provincial laws. I wonder how many low-income Albertans helped craft that legislation. More next month.

By Allan Sheppard

Letter to Ed Stelmach

The author of this letter to Premier Ed Stelmach likes to share his views with the honourable ladies and gentlemen of the Alberta Cabinet. This is one of his correspondences. Watch for further letters in future issues of ESN.

Dear Ed,

I hope my words of encouragement reach you before the election call you're planning for early February. I have a feeling the media want to make a big deal about an "old tired government that's run out of ideas" in this campaign. Instead of joining in admiration when the Alberta Tories beat the old Social Credit record for being the longest government in office in Alberta last summer they ignored the event. Now, instead of editorials marvelling at your ability to lead with nothing but an endless river of money to make up for lack of talent, they have headlines saying you're in trouble. I think they want to try to stir up an idea that people in Alberta are looking for something new and different, something that at least slightly resembles the world of the 21st century.

I want to reassure you there's nothing to worry about. You folks have earned the 2008 IYCDTWBWTBWS (If You Can't Dazzle Them With Brilliance, Baffle Them With Bull Shit) Award, and we're not even a month in yet. That gives you a huge head start on the sincere dullards on the other side of the political scale who keep trying to actually put forward contentful policy ideas and program proposals.

You've had headlines in the past few days alone for major announcements about the environment, arts & culture, ending homelessness, and standing up to the bad guys in Ottawa and the East. Since almost no one pays attention after the first ten seconds of these stories, nearly everyone thinks you are really cooking, solving major issues by the day. As you know, it doesn't matter one bit that there is no useful or significant content to any of those announcements. You just have to make them so the lazy media can report them, and you are doing that at a furious pace. And on the heels of buying off the teachers and the doctors not long ago, you're pretty well set to go.

You also have absolutely mastered the trick of showing not the slightest hint of embarrassment as you talk out of the two utterly contradictory sides of your mouth at the same time, promising new fresh change AND the stability and great record of 36 years of Tory governance. Since almost no one notices how absurd that claim is, you can be pretty sure you can get away with saying anything else you feel like and no one will expect it to make sense either.

By Easter you'll be safely back in office for another few years and then you can bring in the meanest budget you want, give the rich more generous tax breaks and begrudge the poor even a few more pennies, and what's anyone going to be able to do about it?

Yes, Ed, you understand the Alberta mindset that mixes equal parts of greed, self-satisfied complacency, and casual paternalistic conscience. You use the language of "I-pulled-myself-up-by-my-own-bootstraps-and-anyone-else-who-can't-do-that-must-be-a-lazy-freeloader" like one born to it, and then magically stir in just enough of "of-course-we-want-to-lend-a-helping-hand-to-the-deserving-unfortunates" to prevent an attack of guilty conscience—but making sure it's those of us at the top who get to define "deserving". You underlay it all with a generous dollop of "after-all-we-deserve-to-have-all-this-for-ourselves". If that's not the recipe for another solid majority government, I can't imagine what is.

As for those polls, what I see them saying in that about twice as many people think you are the man as anyone else in the picture and that a bunch of them are fed-up with liberal pollsters wanting to make you look bad, so they're refusing to tell them what they're thinking. In the end, most of them, unless they just stay home to watch hockey on election day, will dutifully realize it would be too much bother to take a chance on anyone new and will mark their ballot by their friendly PC candidate's name. Especially after you've inundated them with a couple of million dollars worth of slick reassuring ads for a month.

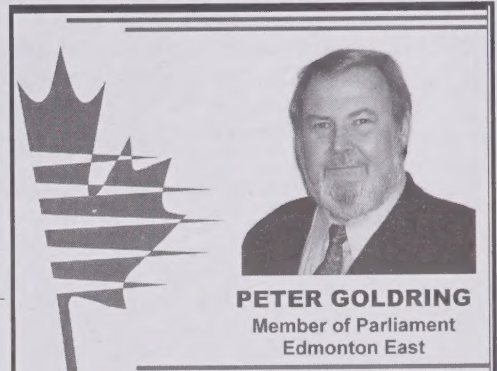
Sure you will need to trot out some promises to get a few more highways twinned, some programs to give public money to the free-enterprise farmers, reassurance to employers they can keep bringing all the cheap foreign workers they want rather than paying adequate wages to people already here.... Oh and some vague talk of keeping money flowing to hospitals and schools, but you've been doing that well for ages, measuring everything in those areas by total dollars you can brag about spending, instead of daring to look at new ideas that might achieve better results instead of just money out the door.

And Ed, one more thing that encourages me-- all those young candidates you have, and ethnic diversity—it's so good to see that we don't have a bunch of social activist radicals trying to change things anymore, but that our youth and our newcomers are being successfully indoctrinated to understand how the system works and to realize the secret is not to fight it but to join it if you want a good life. Along with making sure the people at the bottom end are so beaten down they have lost any hope or energy to do anything about their state, that's going to help make sure there's no rocking the boat in Alberta for a long time to come.

Here's to a lot of great Election Day victory parties for the grand old leviathan, the Alberta Tories!

Ready for the campaign trail,

Ted White.



PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

EDMONTON TO GET NEW UKRAINIAN CONSULATE

Edmonton will be the location of a new Ukrainian consulate to be opened later this year.

Advancing the interests of the Ukrainian Community in Western Canada Peter Goldring, Member of Parliament for Edmonton East, had written to the Minister of Foreign Affairs asking what steps needed to be taken for Ukraine to establish a consulate in Edmonton to serve the city and the hundreds of thousands of Canadians of Ukrainian descent in the Prairies.

"I am pleased that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Maxime Bernier, has supported my request to have a Ukrainian consulate in Edmonton," Mr. Goldring said while making the announcement at his constituency office. "He has instructed his officials to work closely with their Ukrainian counterparts to have the consulate established by 2008."

While Ukraine has honorary consuls in Winnipeg and Vancouver, this will be the first time full consular services have been available to western provinces. At present such services are only available through the consulate in Toronto or the Ukrainian embassy in Ottawa.

Mr. Goldring said the consulate will help protect the interests of Ukraine in Western Canada and will facilitate tourist traffic both to and from Ukraine. It will also help further the development of commercial, economic, cultural and scientific ties between Ukraine and Canada.

"It seemed to me that establishing a Ukrainian consulate in Edmonton would be the next logical step in the growing relationship between our two countries," Mr. Goldring said. "I am pleased that Minister Bernier has agreed."

During a visit to Edmonton in March 2007, His Excellency Ihor Ostash, the Ambassador of Ukraine, indicated that he too would support the establishment of a consulate in the city.

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Crippled Love

By Pamela Jones

Some say an infant has a sense of remembrance
Once created before the foundation of this world
As the Bible says,
Created to dance around the heavenly throne,
Delighted to sing the heavenly song,
Elated to grasp the Father's love.
Eternal Joy.... Eternal Peace

Such a wonder we soon forget.

Societal norms.... Distant peace
Abusive, violated, poverty stricken communities
Betrayal of justice, love, condemn
Children having children
Children killing children
Parents, siblings, disowning their own
Divorce rates greater than the sacred
Union meant to be.

Crippled love
Crippled peace
Crippled joy

Help me remember, Lord,
How we once shared
And danced around the heavenly throne,
Singing the heavenly song
And grasping the Father's love
Eternal joy ... Eternal peace.

Awakening

Radiant light steps inside
Warming light, fullness of light
Jesus himself
He not only gives me love, he is love.
He not only gives me joy, he is joy.
He not only gives me peace, he is peace.
Unmeasurable grace is but a gift.

Knowing this, I can freely give.
Freely give, for I have freely received.
Freely give and embrace a society
Knowing injustice, betrayal, abuse and poverty
Let me seek out the children
Dying inside at such an early age.

Let me draw upon the Father's love
Share from a heart that feels and cares
Because I've been
Betrayed, abused, unjustly treated
Cast away, long forgotten, poverty stricken

But now I remember who I am.
And Whose I am.
Created before the worlds began.
Dancing around the heavenly throne,
Singing the heavenly song
I've grasped the Father's love
Known joy and known his peace
No longer crippled love
No longer crippled joy.
No longer crippled peace.

Sentimental Journey

I'm returning from a sentimental journey
Where wild flowers blossom all year round
I am returning from a sentimental journey
Where the sun shines bright
And the sky is always blue.

Sometimes my heart likes to travel
Sometimes I see pictures in my mind
Sometimes I just like to daydream
Sometimes I hold memories of you.

I thank the Lord for giving me the goodness
I thank Him for the lessons we must learn
I thank Him for the memories of loving.
I thank him for the memories of you.

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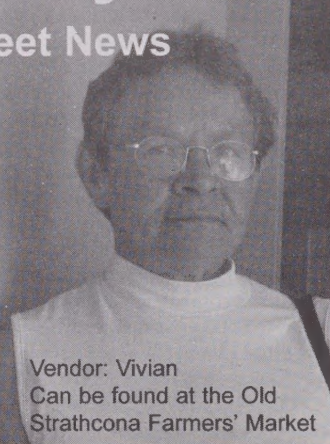


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"The Street Will Drive You Crazy"

Continued from page 5

strict rules regarding social conduct, which may conflict with homeless women's "need to be tough" to survive on the street. As a result, many homeless women are barred from social-service or mental-health programs with stringent behavioral codes, Luhrmann noted.

Understanding the reasons why homeless women with serious mental illness refuse social services, such as housing, as a "meaningful social signal" rather than a lack of insight should lead service providers to take a different approach to the way they offer services. In interactions with homeless women who have a psychotic disorder, "every effort should be made to avoid presenting the patient with an explicit psychiatric diagnosis," Luhrmann noted. Instead, clinicians and administrators should construct interventions that are more sensitive to these women's social context, she said, and that don't explicitly label the women with a psychiatric diagnosis because it is perceived as a "sign of great vulnerability to predatory others."

At present, many supported housing programs for individuals with psychiatric disabilities require clients to be assessed and diagnosed and to agree to participate in psychiatric treatment and sometimes substance abuse treatment.

"Not requiring that clients go off to a psychiatrist [to get a psychiatric diagnosis] is one way of minimizing refusal of services," Luhrmann suggested.

According to Jeffrey Stovall, M.D., chair of APA's Corresponding Committee on Poverty, Homelessness, and Psychiatric Disorders, Luhrmann provides "important social and cultural insight that declining to accept housing may not be a sign of poor insight, but may rather be an individual's attempt to avoid stigmatization and institutionalization."

Stovall suggested that psychiatrists advocate for patients' access to permanent housing that is provided within treatment programs and also for the "housing first" approach, which does not require sobriety, makes minimal demands on client compliance, and minimizes psychiatric evaluation and diagnosis.

Luhrmann's article should "encourage us to advocate for the availability of flexible and engaging psychiatric services provided outside of traditional clinical settings, particularly those services integrated into other social and clinical services that are provided to people who are homeless."

By Eve Bender

<http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/165/1/15>